

The Slateboard

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SURVIVING THE BUDGET CRUNCH

By Cynthia Tuell

The state of California is coming up seriously short of funds this year, and UC is feeling the pinch. We're not being pinched as viciously as CSU, which has been downright bruised and battered. At CSU, Lecturers have been laid off by the hundreds, student fees raised, classes cancelled to the extent that it may take most students six years to graduate, and courses taught by faculty hired at much lower pay through Extension or even by unpaid, volunteer teachers who work for fun or the sake of their vitae. UC, like other elites, has so far been spared the worst effects of the state funding crisis.

However, we're still in some pretty bad trouble, trouble which ultimately can only be solved by an increase in state appropriations. The UC-AFT Perspective (Winter 1992) reports that, between 1982 and 1991, state appropriations for UC rose by only 0.8% when measured against inflation. Since 1986-87, state support has actually declined 3% while student enrollment has risen 9%. These days, though, in the midst of a recession, it seems that the state simply can't

provide more for UC: there's nothing there to give.

So what do we do in the meantime, while we wait, more or less hopefully, for the economy to improve? A substantial increase in student fees has been proposed, the second in two years. But UC is already ranked as the second most expensive state institution in the U.S. by the 1991 College Board Cost Book. The Perspective also reports that, between 1982 and 1988, the portion of UC students coming from high income families rose from 21% to 28%. Thanks to improvements in need-based student grants, the percentage of students from low-income families decreased by only 3%. But the number of middle-income students dropped during this period by almost 10%. An additional tuition increase would certainly squeeze our middle- and lower-income students even harder--so hard that many would have to transfer to the disastrously overburdened CSU system, or drop out of college entirely.

Another recent proposal, made by the Legislative Analyst in Sacramento, is to increase Senate faculty teaching loads from an average of five courses a year to six courses, which would eventually, she claims, save UC \$47 million yearly. The L.A. Times (3/3/92) reports that David Gardner called the proposal "fundamentally the most destructive recommendation that has been made" during his nine years as UC President. He claimed that the rise in faculty-student ratio that a workload increase would bring about would hurt UC's competitiveness as an employer, and UC would begin losing talented faculty to other universities. (As a Lecturer who teaches nine labor-intensive writing classes a year, I sometimes find it hard to sympathize with Senate faculty who see even a five-course load as a terrible burden. However, I also understand that, were Senate teaching loads increased, the \$47 million saved would certainly come out of Lecturer pocketbooks, because many fewer of us would be needed to cover courses.)

Surely there are other ways to save money than by squeezing students and/or faculty at an institution committed to quality public education. For instance, how about cutting some of the fat cats' fat? In Academe (Nov.-Dec. '91), Barbara Bergmann reports that, in 1930, for every dollar spent on instruction, U.S. colleges and universities spent 19 cents for administration. By 1987-88, that figure had climbed to 45 cents for each instructional dollar. And these figures for administrative costs do not include expenditures for libraries; for student services such as counseling, admissions, or placement; for the operation of the physical plant; for research; or even for any administrative costs directly connected with such services. The 45 cents per teaching dollar pays for deans and chancellors--vice, associate, assis-

tant, assistant-to, and all permutations thereof. Bergmann argues that "the growth of administration to its present levels derives from two things: the desire of each administrator for underlings, and a governance problem--weak curbs on administrative growth." Clearly UC can't afford to continue funding an administrative cancer that feeds on a lust for subordinates.

Of course, the budget makers and cutters will not likely be willing to cut themselves in the name of quality education. Perhaps they even see themselves as essential to preserving it. But you and I know better. We might help to shame or force them into tightening their belts instead of hanging us and our students, if we raise our voices and ask to be heard. Write to your state legislators today.

NOTICE TO LECTURERS:

If you have less than six years of service as a Lecturer and you wish to continue working next year at UCR, the union strongly recommends that you apply formally for reappointment. Address your letter of application and any supporting materials to your department or program head, and send it by certified mail, return receipt requested. **You must apply for reappointment if you want to preserve your rights under the MOU.** You may believe that you have "an understanding" with your department that you will be reappointed for next year. However, if you don't formally apply for your position, and don't receive a formal, written offer of employment in return, your "understanding" is worth no more than the hot air it's composed of.

Voucher "Choice" Is Consumer Fraud

by Mary Bergan, President,
California Federation of
Teachers

The school voucher plan is back again in the form of an initiative recently submitted to the Attorney General, and intended for the November 1992 ballot. The initiative would transfer funds directly out of the public schools and offer a "scholarship" voucher that can be claimed by any student attending a private school, with virtually no accountability placed on the school. A false promise to parents and students, a free ticket for private school operators to profit at public expense, and another tax giveaway to the wealthy, the voucher "choice" is a consumer fraud that would extract a high price from society and offer no advantage to school children or their families:

- the voucher system does nothing to improve school quality, but is a means of giving money to people already sending their children to private schools;

- vouchers can't expand school choice for children because private schools may still charge many times over the "scholarship" grant and exclude all but those who can afford to pay more tuition, transport their children to any site, and buy any required supplies, from books to computers;

- a proliferation of private schools will result in either a bigger, costlier bureaucracy to monitor their performance or an open season for corruption and profiteering;

- subsidizing private schools at the expense of public schools will sabotage the desperately-needed improvements neces-

sary for all schools, public and private, to catch up with the changing economy and job market demands in California;

- based on the myth that competition will improve productivity, the deregulation of public education will prove far more costly to our economy than the disastrous effects of deregulating private industries such as airlines and savings and loans; and

- promotion of private schools will further erode the common values and principles that hold America together as a nation; our schools are the unifying source of community that make it possible for young people of differing economic, cultural and family backgrounds to work and grow together, and to perpetuate American tradition and culture.

Prestigious national commissions which have taken hard, honest looks at education and youth, and at America's economy and workforce skills, recommend an entirely different course for the future of our economy. Proponents of a voucher system would reject the comprehensive research and proposals of the National Commission on Children, appointed by the President and Congress, the Commission for Economy, composed of major corporate leaders and educators, the Business Roundtable Education Public Policy Agenda, representing some 200 corporations, and the Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce of the National Center on Education and the Economy.

There are few advocates for the failed concept of achieving excellence in public education through private market competition because all of the evidence points in the opposite direction. A common theme among the many respected national studies is a call for greater coordination and collaboration among agencies responsible for the well-being and educational development of young people, and for streamlined bureaucracies to allow increased innovation and creative

solutions that will bring our schools in line with the demands of our economy and our culture.

We have a tough job to transform our educational system in a manner that will keep pace with the transformation of our society. The private school voucher initiative is a serious threat to advancing education in a time that urgently demands effective education for all, not increased subsidies for the wealthy few.

(Reprinted from the Media Report on CFT Political and Policy Action, Winter 1991, No. 3)

UC-AFT UNIT 18 BARGAINING UPDATE

In February the UC-AFT entered into negotiations with the University to improve articles of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for lecturers and Supervisors of Teacher Education (Unit 18). The University opened Duration to extend the life of the contract. The Union opened three articles: Benefits, No Strikes, and Waiver. Our aims were to institute benefits for Unit 18 parttimers and for domestic partners and to make the technical language of No Strikes and Waiver more equitable. (No, we don't want to go on strike; we just want respect.)

After bargaining sessions ended on March 5, the University and the UC-AFT still had not come to an agreement on any of these articles. Our Chief Negotiator Mike Rotkin and our Labor Consultant Ed Purcell will keep the rest of the UC-AFT Bargaining team informed about new developments. For further information, see Barbara Gable, UCR's member of the team.

WHAT NEW CHANCELLOR? THE SEARCH GOES ON??

The name of UCR's next chancellor will be announced sometime this month, although the entire search has been conducted in great secrecy. Several names have been mentioned in the press and in local rumors, but no one except President Gardner knows who he will pick. The committee, consisting of a few UCR representatives, a couple of faculty members from other campuses, and some Regents, has reviewed the candidates; however, their opinions are only advisory.

In a letter dated Feb. 6, 1992, Barbara Gable of Local 1966 asked President Gardner to hold open forums so that the campus community could meet the finalists in the search for a new chancellor. As of mid-March the letter remains unanswered. With very little input, President Gardner will choose whoever he wants, perhaps considering the ideas of the small handful of members of the advisory committee, hardly a group representative of UCR.

It is probably now too late to affect the decision; it was probably always too late. We can only hope that President Gardner will choose wisely. Since he also is retiring, there will be no one left to blame if, after we get to know the new chancellor, we are not satisfied with him or her. President Gardner's replacement is also being chosen behind closed doors. Perhaps with a new president and a new chancellor, University procedures for future selections can be changed to allow openness.

Marriott Foodservice Fails to Abide by Contract

by Mark Thaler

[Mark Thaler is a member of the Campus Coalition of Concern, an activist group consisting of members of campus unions and student clubs, as well as other individuals who care about fairness and justice in the University's dealings with its employees and students. You are welcome to join the CCC in meetings on the first and third Monday of each month in Watkins 1347. Ed. note]

Marriott foodservice in the UCR Commons is in serious need of environmental, economic, and labor reform. The contract Marriott foodservice has with the university is not a bad deal for the campus. The problem is that Marriott is not doing business by the terms of the contract.

The Campus Concerns Coalition (CCC) decided to investigate Marriott and its dealings on campus because of the continued problems student groups have had in effecting positive change in the foodservice. The CCC found that the company is not living up to its contract with the university in several ways and is costing the university thousands of extra dollars every year.

According to the contract, Marriott is encouraged to use bio-degradable serving ware and be responsive to environmental concerns. The contract also directs Marriott to pilot a recycling program. The company has implemented a styrofoam recycling program, but it is now in danger due largely to Marriott's half-hearted efforts.

According to the Highlander, the recycling program may now be cancelled because the recycling company has told

Marriott that the styrofoam is too contaminated with other trash. The Marriott manager publicly blamed students for not separating their own trash. But, Sacred Earth Club members found that Marriott's own employees fail to separate the trash 60% of the time, casting doubt over the company's stated commitment to styrofoam recycling.

Before Marriott took over in the Commons, food was served on re-usable plates, and the entire commons produced about six bags of trash every day. Now, about 27 bags are taken out each day. This brings up the next and perhaps most serious contract non-compliance. According to the contract, Marriott has to pay for the removal of this trash.

The University Grounds Department has been removing the trash, paying for the trash liners and the dumpsters, and for the trucks used to haul the trash away. Grounds in turn backcharges the University. Some CCC members familiar with Grounds estimate that the annual cost including salaries and equipment may be as much as tens of thousands of dollars per year. This is mandated by the contract to be Marriott's burden, but it is one that is not being carried.

There are more instances of contract non-compliance. Last year, one of the key arguments against bringing Carl's Jr. on campus was that students needed more healthy food options. The Marriott manager promised to install a salad bar, but this year he reneged on that promise. According to the contract, however, Marriott must keep up with trends in the foodservice industry to meet the demands of the campus. Salad bars are now fairly standard in the foodservice industry, and the need has been clearly stated. But the Marriott manager flip-flopped, saying this year that it will cost too much money.

The contract also requires Marriott to be "assertive" in hiring student workers. Marriott has never advertised job openings

by flyer or in the Highlander. Marriott does not participate in the Work Study Program, unlike most other campus student employers. Marriott also hires workers from outside the campus for jobs that students could fill. The CCC, however, supports Marriott's participation in a program hiring workers with disabilities.

The University's contract with Marriott also requires that the company set up nutritional information posters, and provide nutritional information cards for the entrees they regularly serve. Marriott does not do this.

Marriott is now looking for a new UCR manager, since the old manager resigned last month. According to the contract, the University has the right to review the final three candidates. Vice Chancellor of Student Services Dale Bailey has agreed that a forum will be held so that the campus community can meet with the candidates.

This meeting is probably the next step to take in pressuring Marriott for contract compliance. It's probably not a good idea to bank the hopes for foodservice reform on the Administration. But the more people become aware of these problems, the more they will look foolish not to demand what is fairly due to the University.

People interested in participating in the candidates forum or some other aspect of this issue can contact Eric Johnson, President of the Campus Coalition of Concern, in Buildings and Grounds or at (714) 276-9033, or Mark Thaler through the Sacred Earth Club (Commons mailbox).

UC-AFT Local 1966 Officers

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About the Slateboard

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The editorial board is made up of members of Local 1966. Opinions are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the editorial board. We encourage submissions of articles and letters from other members of the campus community. Bring items to the Editor, Barbara Gable, English.